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CORRECTED COPY OF ISLAMABAD 10539

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SUBJECT: CORRECTED COPY: MUSHARRAF AND ADVISORS CONFER ON
FATA PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

REF: ISLAMABAD 9706

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Peter W. Bodde,
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) In a June 6 conversation, National Security Advisor Tariq Aziz told the Ambassador that President Musharraf had convened a meeting of his senior advisors on June 5 to discuss next steps in implementing the government's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) strategy. The participants -- Vice Chief of Army Staff GEN Ahsan Hayat, 11th Corps Commander LTG Mohammad Hamid Khan, ISI Director General Kayani, newly-appointed NWFP Governor Orakzai and Aziz -- agreed that Governor Orakzai should convene a jirga(s) to garner the broadest possible tribal support for the government's policy of comprehensive economic and social development in the context of a calm security environment. Aziz said that the a "calm security environment" explicitly rules out cross border infiltration and harboring foreigners. Recognizing that this will be a complex process, Musharraf left to Governor Orakzai's discretion whether to organize a series of jirgas or to convene a grand jirga.

¶2. (C) At the request of the GEN Ahsan, participants also agreed that new Political Agents assigned to the FATA would not be appointed from the ranks of currently serving or recently retired military officers. Aziz thought it noteworthy that GEN Ahsan himself observed that the Pakistani Army is so disliked in the tribal areas that assigning military officers as FATA administrators would only add to the government's troubles. (Note: This account from Aziz directly contradicts June 3 press reports that Musharraf had decided to use military officers as FATA political agents. End note.)

¶3. (C) Aziz also reported that Sahibzada Imtiaz has been appointed head of the FATA Development Authority. The Ambassador remarked that he hoped that this appointment would lead the government to produce, in short order, a fully-developed plan for the FATA, expanding on the concepts put forward in the Economic Initiative for the FATA paper drafted by Minister of Industries Jehangir Khan Tareen.

¶4. (C) Aziz candidly told the Ambassador that the situation in the FATA is frightening, saying that the government must "get it right" this time. When the Ambassador asked about press reports that NWFP Chief Minister Akram Khan Durrani and the provincial government were also being brought into the effort (an alliance, in the Ambassador's view, akin to letting the fox into the hen house), Aziz replied that stark political realities underlay Durrani's Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam

(F) (JUI-F) support of the government's FATA campaign: the "Talibanization" of the FATA is eroding JUI-F's political base in the tribal areas. Chief Minister Durrani's uncle was murdered by Taliban in April and Taliban forces are now setting their sites on Durrani's home district of Bannu.

BODDE